

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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Life in Yemen is a hell which no man has the strength to endure, for Yemen is devoid of all civilized aspects of life.

The following are some of the aspects of Yemenite life:

1. Ignorance

There is no education or schooling in Yemen. Indeed there is disgraceful ignorance and complete illiteracy in the true meaning of the term. There has been no attempt to alleviate this situation, so long as this ignorance and illiteracy have served the purposes of the Imam, by creating in the minds of the people the illusion that Imam is aware of their actions and their intentions, watches over their movements and their thoughts, and would wreak vengeance on all who would oppose his wishes. Thus, the Yemenites live in the grip of ignorance and superstition.

2. The Press

So long as ignorance prevails in Yemen in this ugly fashion, the result will be that no press will thrive there. The fact is that the Yemenite people are prevented from reading the newspapers and from following the events of the Arab world, such as the Arab Collective Security Pact which binds governments of the Arab countries, including Yemen. In fact, the Yemenites are not even in a position to comprehend the ramifications of the pact, and if they are ever called upon to take part in implementing the pact, they would be at a complete loss.

3. Freedom

The guillotines in Yemen have severed the heads of some brilliant Yemenites, among them, scientists, scholars, and thinkers. Those still alive have been consigned to the shadows of the dungeons, where they live in filth, hunger, and misery.

4. Disease

The Yemenites live a life unlike that of other people. They have no means by which to dress their wounds or soothe their pain, nor money to provide medicine and remedy for the needs of their sick. They are like a people that have never seen an era of knowledge, civilization, and refinement. Whoever looks at the Yemenites today feels as though he were standing before a people in the most backward and primitive conditions possible. In Yemen today, there are no hospitals, no doctors, no first-aid stations, nor anything to show that the people there are living in the 20th century.

A Call to the Arabs and Muslims

We entreat the Muslims in general, and especially the Arab youth; we appeal to the Arab press and the press of the Muslim world, to all groups and parties, and to the governments of the Arab and Muslim countries, foremost among them Egypt, the leader of the Arab nations. We beg them all to make it clear to the Imam of Yemen that the Yemenites who have been placed in this abnormal position are liable to extinction.

We hope that these Arabs and Muslims will intercede in setting up a governmental structure which will supervise the means of education, health, and safety in Yemen, and also intercede with the Imam for the release of prisoners and hostages. We hope that such action will banish the nightmare of poverty from the oppressed Yemenites and remove ignorance and superstition from the Yemenite household.

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Food and trade are monopolized by the Imam, unemployment is widespread, diseases are rampant, and the people are destitute. It is impossible to describe the Yemenite situation in its actual condition, but we implore the Arab countries to request the Imam, through their organizations and governments that he be kind enough to permit the entry of a committee from the Arab States, composed of Arab physicians, educators, and experts in agriculture, trade, journalism, and engineering to acquaint themselves first-hand with the life of these unfortunate Yemenites. We are willing to risk our reputation and our very lives on what we have said, and if the committee finds that what we have said is true, then we are satisfied for having done an honorable task for Yemen; but if the committee finds that we are in error, then we will welcome any chastisement and punishment that might befall us. -- 'Abd-Allah 'Ali al-Hakimi, publisher of the newspaper as-Salam, and President of the Muslim Colony in the United Kingdom.

YEMEN DENIES OIL NEGOTIATIONS WITH US -- Cairo, Al-Jumhur al-Misri, 15 Dec 52

Editor's Note: There has been an increase lately in the letters we have been receiving from the free Yemenites who have emigrated from Yemen. In these letters, these Yemenites ask us to work for the defeat of imperialist plans in Yemen, especially plans for extracting oil, which some US companies are preparing at present. The free people of Yemen have also requested us to sound their cry, demanding that the light of learning be allowed to penetrate the closed gates of Yemen. Furthermore, some of them have asked us to take advantage of the visit to Cairo of Prince Sayf-al-Islam al-Hasan, the Yemenite Prime Minister, and to inquire of the position of the Yemenite Government on these problems.

The interview conducted by al-Jumhur al-Misri with Sayf-al-Islam al-Hasan is described below:

Prince Sayf-al-Islam al-Hasan, Prime Minister of Yemen and one of the sons of Imam Ahmad, the King of Yemen, in speaking to us about the affairs of his country, seemed to be greatly concerned about two things: (1) the Yemenite Government's determination not to permit Anglo-US imperialism to infiltrate into Yemen, and (2) the desire of the Government of Yemen to work for liberating the people of Yemen from the darkness of the Middle Ages.

Asked about the oil contracts, which Imam Ahmad is reported to be ready to make with the Americans, Sayf-al-Islam denied these reports, saying, "We have enough troubles without adding imperialism to them."

'Ali al-Mu'ayyid, the Yemenite Minister in Cairo, was present during the interview, and he elaborated on the answer of Sayf-al-Islam by saying: "His Highness Prince Sayf-al-Islam will never go to the US, and there is nothing in his plans connected with oil or anything else that might interest imperialism. All there is to the matter is that the Prince is going abroad to visit the capitals of some of the other countries and to acquire a general idea of educational policies in the outside world."

Asked about the reasons of the Yemenite Government for not sending educational missions abroad, the Prince replied: "The Yemenite Government wishes to bring up a generation educated in Arab and Islamic culture; and with this aim in mind we are discussing a new educational program which will realize this goal as soon as possible. The Yemenite Government has charged its Ministry of Education to accomplish this program, with the aid of an Egyptian mission which will work in Yemen. At present, Yemen is in need of many scholars and educators. However, because of the lack of time, we want the school curricula to be different from those followed in Egypt. For we are in need of a rapid acquisition of a good collection of scholars. As for manual and professional schooling, such as medicine and engineering, we prefer to send our missions to the Arab countries to seek this kind of training."

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We asked the Prince if the stay of the Princes Sayf-al-Islam al-Qasim, and Sayf-al-Islam 'abd-Allah in the US had any connection with the reported Yemeni-US oil deal. The Prince answered: "As for Sayf-al-Islam al-Qasim, he is staying in the US for his health, and his presence there has nothing to do with an oil contract. As for Sayf-al-Islam 'abd-Allah, we consider him our Ambassador to the US, and his presence there is normal and has no connection with an oil contract."

CONFLICT REPORTED ON ADEN-YEMEN BORDER -- Damascus, al-Jabal, 24 Jan 53

Aden, January 21 -- The slight disturbance started in the Sabihi principality, a small state between Aden and Yemen, began to mount and has now become a growing danger to peace in the region. The British authorities claimed that the government of Yemen was reinforcing one of the Sabihi shaykhs, while the governments of Aden and Lahej moved to capture him, and the tribesmen of Sabihi threatened armed resistance. The trouble started when the government of Aden and the Sultanate of Lahej sent soldiers to bring a stop to the fighting which broke out 3 weeks ago among the tribesmen of Sabihi. Prior to this action, a detachment of soldiers from Lahej had been sent to arrest Shaykh Mahmud Shahir of Sabihi, who was making active protests against the taxes imposed by Lahej on the hunting lands and the fisheries used by the Sabihi population. The fishing industry is the most important for the people of Sabihi, who number about 20,000 persons. The detachment of Lahej soldiers retreated, however, and one of its men was killed. Shaykh Shahir escaped and fled to the al-Mansuri tribe, one of the tribes of Sabihi. It was learned that a group of the al-Mansuri tribe gave refuge to Shaykh Shahir; but another branch of the tribe accused the group that gave refuge to Shaykh Shahir of betraying the people of Sabihi, and a battle occurred between the two forces, in which no less than five persons were killed. Following this incident, the authorities of Aden and Lahej promptly sent their forces to Tur al-Baha', one of the centers of the Sabihi principality.

It was also reported that, following the incident, some 800 men of the Sabihi principality, along with Shaykh Shahir and the al-Mansuri Shaykh who gave him refuge, fled to the Qabitan region in Yemen to escape the forces of Lahej and Aden. It was reported that the Qabitan tribe was prepared to help all those that escaped from Sabihi; but the escaped leaders sent word to Aden that while they recognized Aden's authority, they would never recognize that of Lahej.

It was understood that the government of Aden intends to occupy the territory of the al-Mansuri tribe and of Shaykh Shahir until the two shaykhs surrender to it. It was also learned that the tribesmen of Sabihi intend to continue their armed resistance.

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